

## **Congressman Travis Childers Continues to Stand Up for Gun Owners' Rights despite Attacks**

September 10, 2008

Washington, DC – This week, Congressman Travis Childers (D-MS) has taken various punches from the national media and gun rights opponents, but has continued to stand up for gun owners' rights by supporting his Second Amendment Enforcement Act (H.R. 6691).

The bipartisan legislation, which Congressman Childers introduced earlier this summer and is likely to reach the House floor next week, seeks to overturn Washington, D.C.'s recently enacted gun control laws that defy last month's Supreme Court decision to overturn D.C.'s gun ban.

"Despite inaccurate claims from the national media and gun rights opponents, the Second Amendment Enforcement Act's sole purpose is to ensure that every American is guaranteed the fundamental and constitutional right to bear arms," said Congressman Childers. "In June, the Supreme Court overturned Washington, D.C.'s gun ban in an effort to protect the Second Amendment. While I do not condone Washington, D.C.'s lack of congressional representation, I do support the Supreme Court's ruling. D.C. city officials have since enacted gun control laws that defy this ruling, and I am committed to making sure that American citizens retain the ability to defend themselves, as it is laid out in the Constitution.

"Some have accused my bill of intentionally stripping D.C. of its control over gun regulation. I assure the city that the legislation's only purpose is to restore the rights of gun owners. The bill has also been attacked for unnecessarily going further than the Supreme Court ruling itself, giving criminals and children free reign to commit violent crimes. This is simply false. Again, the bill that I have introduced is a direct attempt to reinstate Americans' Second Amendment rights and does not serve to go beyond this purpose."

The Committee on Oversight and Government Reform marked up the Second Amendment Enforcement Act today and it is expected to move to the House floor sometime early next week.

## **Disproving the Myths**

*"[A] planned vote on legislation so extreme it would strip the District of all power to regulate guns...H.R. 6691 is the latest effort by the National Rifle Association to wrest jurisdiction over local gun legislation from the District's elected officials...Equally troubling is that the bill goes beyond the scope of the ruling in District of Columbia v. Heller authorizing gun possession for self-defense in the home."*

- "The House's Stickup," Washington Post, Sept. 8, 2008

*"D.C. Police Chief Cathy L. Lanier testified today that a bill under consideration by Congress would allow residents to carry loaded semi-automatic rifles in the District, creating a heightened risk of a terrorist attack."*

- "At Hearing, D.C. Police Officials Challenge Proposed Gun Bill," Washington Post, Sept. 9, 2008

Myth: H.R. 6691 would extinguish virtually all gun regulations in the nation's Capital.

Fact: This legislation is a narrowly tailored compromise, designed to overturn only those provisions of D.C. law that obviously conflict with the Supreme Court's ruling

. The D.C. Council retains the authority to enact sensible restrictions designed to keep guns out of the hands of criminals and others who should not possess them, so long as those restrictions do not infringe upon the constitutionally guaranteed rights of law abiding D.C. residents.

Myth: H.R. 6691 would allow residents to purchase military-style assault rifles or sniper rifles anywhere in the country, transport them into Washington, DC and carry them in public.

Fact: This legislation would allow D.C. residents to purchase only those guns that are legal under federal law and only from a federally licensed firearm dealer in Maryland or Virginia

. Our legislation repeals only the criminal penalties that prohibit a lawful gun owner from

possessing a gun in his or her home or place of business,  
not in public

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Myth: H.R. 6691 would make it more difficult to break up gun trafficking operations based in the District, and would impair law enforcement's ability to protect the nation's Capital. Fact: This legislation would have no effect on law enforcement's ability to crack down on those who traffic in illegal weapons, or criminals who prey on D.C. residents and visitors. Rather, our bill ensures that law abiding citizens who are not prohibited by federal law from gun ownership can purchase a legal firearm from a federally licensed firearms dealer and keep that gun in their home to protect themselves from criminals. Felons, the mentally ill, and those convicted of domestic violence offenses would continue to be prohibited from owning a firearm

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Myth: While H.R. 6691 is ostensibly a response to the Supreme Court's recent Second Amendment decision, it rejects limitations that the court described as "presumptively lawful."

Fact: The legislation passed by the D.C. Council in response to the Heller decision clearly violates the holding of the Supreme Court that law abiding D.C. residents have a right to keep a firearm for self defense. For example, the Supreme Court held that in order for the right to be meaningful, citizens had to be able to have access to the handguns most commonly used for self defense, but the D.C. Council's law would prohibit D.C. residents from purchasing the vast majority of handguns legally for sale today. Furthermore, the D.C. government has allowed only one federally licensed firearm dealer to operate in Washington, D.C., and he operates without a store that is open to the public and specializes in sales to police and security personnel.  
What good is a right to own a firearm if no D.C. resident can legally purchase one?

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